

II. REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

35 U.S.C. § 102 Rejections

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1, 8, 9-12, 14, 19 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(3) as being anticipated by Oliver 6,446,928. Oliver discloses and claims a mouse pad designed to store compact disks and is shown to be accessed via the front of the device. Oliver is also shown as creating a compartmented storage area shaped to retain the stored material on all but one side.

Independent Claims 1, 14 15 and 19 of the present application have been amended to define the storage areas formed within the mouse pad device run continuously from one side of the device to the other. Rejected Claims 2-7, which claim components that would form compartments within the mouse pad, have been withdrawn. In view of these amendments to the claims and the withdrawal of others, Applicant submits that Oliver no longer anticipates any active claims in the application and that each of the amended claims are allowable over Oliver.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-6, 7 and 13 as being anticipated by Schriner 5,542,637. Shriner discloses and claims a mouse pad device having a hinged upper surface that covers internal storage compartments when closed. However, Schriner's extensions which make up the walls of the compartments are not "coupled" between the parallel portions of the device, as are those of the instant application. As such, Shriner does not anticipate any claim of application either in their original form or as amended. Thus, Applicant submits that each of the remaining claims previously rejected as being anticipated by Schriner are allowable.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejections

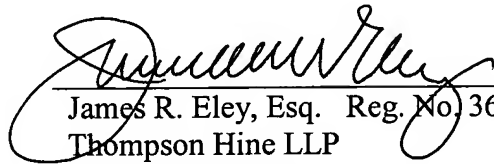
The Examiner has rejected Claims 7 and 15-18 as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Oliver in view of Schriner. These references alone or in combination, neither claim nor suggest a mouse pad having storage areas that extend from one side of the device to the other. In fact, both of these references teach away from such an arrangement. For these reasons, Applicant submits that the remaining claims in the application, as amended, are in proper form for allowance over Oliver in view of Schriner.

III. CONCLUSION

Applicant notes that the Examiner has cited, but not asserted, an additional eight (8) references in connection with this application. Apparently, the Examiner has determined that these additional references, taken alone or in combination, do not adversely affect the patentability of Applicant's claimed invention.

For the reasons discussed above, Applicant submits that the remaining claims, as amended are in proper condition for allowance.

Respectfully Submitted,



James R. Eley, Esq. Reg. No. 36,790
Thompson Hine LLP
10 W. Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43215-3435
Phone: (614) 469-3228
Fax: (614) 469-3361